(b) if so, the present position thereof;

(c) whether the proposed agreement would cover all the criminals; and

(d) if not, the details of the criminals not to be covered under the proposed agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Draft Extradition Treaty was sent to the UAE side in May 1996. The UAE side has suggested some amendments to the draft text. Based on response from the Indian side to the suggested changes, a delegation from the UAE side visited India from 24-25 November 1997 and held discussions with a view to finalising the Agreement.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Details of the crimes to be covered by the proposed Agreement are under negotiation with the U.A.E.

US Offer for "Strategic' Dialogue"

943. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the connotation of the new US strategy of having "strategic dialogue" with India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMALA SINHA): India and the United States are engaged in an intensive and integrated process of dialogue, including a number of highlevel visits. The United States has described this as a "strategic dialogue". The US side defined "strategic dialogue" as "thinking in the future rather that discussing the past". Senior US officials have clarified that the "strategic dialogue" with India does not have any military connotation, and is intended to mean that "the two countries exchange their views not only on bilateral matters but also on regional and global issues and how best we can cooperate in confronting them.

Government's understanding of "strategic dialogue" is that it is a way of continuing indepth and comprehensive discussions on important issues so as to reactivate and upgrade the entire Indo-US relationship through regular exchanges with them.

Irregularities in accounts of Haj Committee

944. SHRI K. REHMAN KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 938 given in the Rajya Sabhaa on the 31st July, 1997 and state:

(a) whether any serious irregularities have been pointed out by the auditors in the account of the Haj Committee; and

(b) what are the details of the audit reports and the annual accounts, balance, income and expenditure account for the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERWANI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The audit of the Haj Committee for the last two years (1995-96 and 1996-97) has not taken place as yet. The detailed report of the audit for 1994-95 and Copies of the annual accounts, balance, income and expenditure accounts of the Haj Committee for the last three years are given in the Annexure. [*See Appendix 182, Annexure No. 24*]

Effects of U.S. and Russia Accord on India's Nuclear Capability

945. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the accord signed between the US and Russia in September this year for halting production of weapons-grade plutonium in both the countries will have adverse effect on India's nuclear capability; and

(b) if so, whether steps are being taken to ensure that the country nuclear programme does not suffer?